

UN Closing Ceremony Looks To Future

Live audio and video from Ceremony Broadcast
Over the Global Internet Computer Network



Contact: Cliff Staton (415) 352-7267
Scott Shafer (415) 352-7266

San Francisco --A two month celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the United Nations will reach a peak on June 26 when President Clinton will be joined by UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, over 150 UN ambassadors, and other international dignitaries for a ceremony marking the Charter's 1945 signing.

The closing ceremony will be preserved for posterity not only on television monitors or on newsprint, but on the global Internet computer network. Reaching over 150 countries, the Internet allows 20-30 million personal computer users to communicate with each other and navigate a "World Wide Web" of databases and multimedia information.

The UN50 Committee is working in cooperation with the United Nations Department of Public Information and with the non-profit Internet Multicasting Service to send live audio and video out from the ceremony to users all over the world who connect to the Multicast Backbone (MBONE). The MBONE is a portion of the Internet that supports advanced functions and high speeds, allowing real-time "broadcasts" to be shared by many users.

In addition to the live multicasting, the event will be stored as a series of multimedia pages on the World Wide Web. Users from most of the popular on-line services will be able to listen to audio of speeches by the dignitaries and "link" to relevant databases around the world such as the UN Virtual Library in Austria or the UN's own servers in New York, Geneva, and other locations.

--more--

The technology used in this live multicast is experimental, but is expected to be widely available in a few years. According to Carl Malamud, President of the Internet Multicasting Service, "It is only fitting that the United Nations should be a testbed for technology that will ultimately allow people in all walks of life and all regions of the world to communicate better with each other."

The address on the Internet for the UN closing ceremony is:

<http://town.hall.org/places/un>

Users can also send electronic mail to un50@town.hall.org

Support for the live multicast of the UN50 closing ceremony is provided by

BBN Planet

Barbara Bellissimo tel: 415.528.7112
<http://www.bbn.com>

SSDS

Marianne Radwan tel: 407.361.8150
<http://www.ssds.com>

Sun Microsystems

George Paolini tel: 415.960.1300
<http://www.sun.com>

Softbank Expos

Mike Millikin tel: 800.interop
<http://www.interop.com>

#